

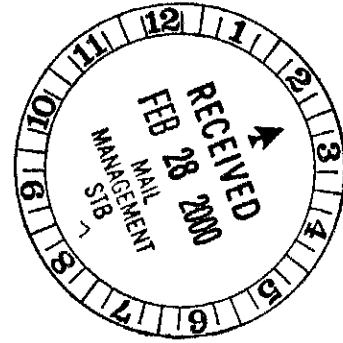


**MANKE
LUMBER
COMPANY, INC.**

1717 Marine View Drive • Tacoma, Washington 98422 • 1-800-426-8488

197286

February 24, 2000



Surface Transportation Board
Office of the Secretary
Case Control Unit, Attn: STB Ex Parte No. 582
1925 K St., NW
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

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Dear Sir:

I applaud the STB on holding public hearings to consider the future of the railroad industry and the impact of any future consolidations and mergers. This action being taken, prior to the BNSF/CN application is crucial to the entire future of the railroad industry in North America.

I am one of the "individual shippers" that use the UP, BNSF, CSXT, NS and many connecting and short line carriers. Manke Lumber Company ships approximately 45,000,000 board feet or 600 cars per year. I strongly oppose any mergers or consolidations at this time. What the rail industry needs now is more competition not less. Over the past five years we have witnessed many major mergers and breakups (CR) and are still dealing with the fallout. To say our customers have been treated poorly during this time would be a gross understatement. Customers in the northeast formerly served by the Conrail are now waiting two to four weeks longer to receive there shipments. Customers in the southwest formerly served by the Southern Pacific went through similar service problems for the last 2 years. We do not need any more disruptions. Ultimately, the consumer has been hurt most by these changes. It is time for everyone to stop and really take notice of what is happening throughout our industry. The railroads need to take this time to strengthen their infrastructures, improve service and bring stability to the industry.

I am very concerned that the board members would even consider a BNSF/CN merger. The ongoing competition to acquire and gain more control of trackage in North America is not serving the best interest of anyone. Ending up with two or three transcontinental railroads would leave us with service that could not meet the demands of the future.

I am strongly opposed to "open access". We have given up a large market share in the northeast to government subsidized lumber from Canada. "open access" would make all receivers in the United States accessible to these Canadian mills. The results would be devastating to U.S. producers. It is difficult competing with subsidized lumber, this would make it almost impossible.

Lets stay status quo for the present and put some integrity back in the transportation industry.

Sincerely,
Manke Lumber Company, Inc.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Stephen Kallberg". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Stephen" and last name "Kallberg" clearly distinguishable.

Stephen Kallberg
Traffic Manager